

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PEKING 00665 070922Z

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CU-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 /041 W

-----070924Z 098326 /15

P 070843Z APR 77

FM USLO PEKING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 624

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 0665

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, KN

SUBJ: GOLD WATCHES FOR KIM IL-SONG'S BIRTHDAY

1. ACCORDING TO STORY MAKING ROUNDS IN PEKING'S DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY -- AND SOON TO BE FILED IN SOME VERSION BY REUTERS -- THE NORTH KOREANS HAVE PAID THE SWISS IN HARD CURRENCY FOR 40,000 GOLD OMEGA WRISTWATCHES BEARING LIKENESSES OF KIM IL-SONG AND HIS SON KIM CHUNG-IL. SUPPOSEDLY THE WATCHES ARE TO BE PRESENTED TO NORTH KOREAN OFFICIALS ON APRIL 15 IN CONNECTION WITH THE ELDER KIM'S 65TH BIRTHDAY.

2. THE SWISS EMBASSY IN PEKING HAS UNOFFICIALLY CONFIRMED THAT THE SALE WAS MADE.

3. ASSUMING THAT THE STORY IS CORRECT, CONVENTIONAL WISDOM HAS IT THAT PRESENTATION OF THE FATHER-AND-SON WATCHES WILL MARK SYMBOLICALLY SOME ADDITIONAL TRANSFER OF RESPONSIBILITY TO THE YOUNGER KIM.

4. KIM IL-SONG'S HEALTH APPARENTLY IS NOT THE ISSUE. REUTERS HAS GLEANED FROM A RECENT ETHIOPIAN DELEGATION TO PYONGYANG THAT  
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KIM IL-SONG WAS "LUCID AND SANE" IN CONVERSATIONS WITH THEM DESPITE THE WELL-KNOWN AND HIGHLY VISIBLE LUMP ON HIS NECK "AS BIG AS A TENNIS BALL."  
GATES

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** WATCHES, GIFTS, PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
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**Review Markings:**  
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